

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

"FREEDOM" CHARITY PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
OPENS AUG 25, @ 6:30PM

"Freedom" is a collaborative exhibition of fine art images by members of the Connecticut Professional Photographers Association (CTPPA) opening **Thursday, August 25, 2016 at 6:30-8:30pm at the Golden Thread Gallery 303 Tunxis Road, West Hartford**. This exhibition will remain on display until Saturday, September 10, 2016 with 100% of all sales being donated to raise funds and awareness of the vital work performed by the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV).

The specific beneficiary is "The Interval House" in Hartford, Ct, one of the 18 local member organizations under the CCADV umbrella. Interval House serves more than 7,000 clients each year through its confidential safe house, 24-hour hotline and Spanish hotline, victim advocates program in the courts, support groups, and satellite offices in Manchester. Since 1977, Interval House has made a positive difference the lives of nearly 150,000 women and children who experienced psychological and physical abuse at the hand of a domestic or intimate partner.

Deb Key, an Avon photographer, first proposed this concept as a positive way to celebrate the "power of the print" by harnessing the talents of peers to collaborate for a common cause beyond the daily demands of business. "We knew most photographers are already actively engaged in their community and this is an opportunity to combine talents for a shared purpose". Members were asked to write a compelling story about a charity they support then vote for one group to focus on in 2016. The winning nomination is CCADV, an alliance organization actively supported for many years by Middletown-based photographer, Sandy Aldieri.

Aldieri explained domestic abuse impacts thousands of victims daily. In 2015 CCADV and its member organizations served over 41,000 victims in CT with nearly 30,000 calls to crisis hotlines and 2,300 people housed in one of their 18 safe homes or emergency shelters. "With a 100% increase in clients over the past 7 years, longer stays requiring more complex range of services and because shelters are already stretched to over-capacity, it's essential to help raise awareness of this situation now. CCADV offers vulnerable people a place of safety and support to help them achieve independent, constructive lives with freedom from fear".

West Hartford photographer Patty Swanson, who has exhibited at the Golden Thread Gallery many times, introduced CTPPA to the supportive GTG co-Founders, Kate Wilson and Tricia Haggerty Wenz, who manage the light-filled space at the Holy Family Retreat.

Wilson was particularly pleased several photographers will be using "Live Portrait", an innovative technology offered by Bay Photo that links a photograph to a video or "virtual world" to expand the artistic vision of their piece. Swanson encourages people to "come prepared to experience this technology by loading the free "Live Portrait" app on your smartphone and bringing headphones before your arrival".

In addition to photographs donated from more than 30 local CT-based participants, generous fine printing services were offered by Alkit and Bay Photo. Art is also being contributed by nationally renowned speakers who have presented at CTPPA educational events in the past 18 months. These award-winning acclaimed photographers include Thom Rouse, Suzette Allen, Mitch Kitter, Shalem Matthew, Peter Wright, Nicole Begley, and many more who support this worthy cause from their home states as far afield as Alaska, California and Florida.

CTPPA is grateful for the generosity of amazing supporters such as Matthew Becker of Becker's Catering for delicious appetizers and desserts; to Ninety+ Cellars for a tasting of refreshing wines and beers on a warm summer's evening. Noted Jazz guitarist, Doug Maher, will provide acoustic music at the opening reception. When offering to provide complimentary entertainment Maher told Mansfield photographer, Kim Bova, "I commend you and CTPPA for organizing this event for such an important cause."

Officially opening the exhibition will be Karen Jarmoc, Chief Executive Officer of CCADV, and Catherine Bradshaw, Interim Executive Director of Interval House. In addition, Sarah Gallardo, herself a survivor, Soroptimist and Director of "Sarah Speaks Up", will read a poem about her experience making the personal, supported transition to a new life of purpose and confidence. "I'm so very excited and honored to be asked to read my poem. The fact that my writing has touched people as it has, is truly a blessing to me".

While the topic of domestic abuse is extremely serious, most donated images celebrate a sense of positive affirmation. As an indication of the type of art to expect, Laraine Weschler described the way her image conveys "a sense of calm, stillness...it takes you away to that place where your soul is free, where you can be in the moment, living with beauty, hope and love."

Key says, "support for this exhibition has exceeded our expectations so you are warmly invited to enjoy these original interpretations of "Freedom" and know you are helping to make a difference for people starting over".

Additional resources:

www.CCADV.org - "Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence"

www.ctppa.com - Connecticut Professional Photographers Association

www.goldenthreadgallery.org - Golden Thread Gallery, West Hartford.

Further inquiries may be directed to Charity spokesperson for CTPPA:

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